

# Alabama Association of Community Corrections

**MISSION** - To provide community-based alternatives to incarceration that reduces the cost of punishment while maintaining the integrity of the criminal justice system.



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## Alabama Community Corrections Programs

**A WIDER AND  
WISER  
ARRAY OF  
SENTENCING**

2004 Regular Session  
of the  
Alabama Legislature

February 2004

### What is Community Corrections?

Correctional services and programs available in the local community that provide a comprehensive array or continuum of sanctions which may serve as an alternative to or supplement a term of incarceration in the county jail or state penitentiary. These programs focus on intermediate sanctions that lie somewhere between prison and routine probation with respect to their restrictiveness, supervision and the services they offer, and may be utilized to reach otherwise prison or jail-bound felons.

### What Community Corrections Programs Can Do:

- ☀ Change offenders habits and behaviors, unlike incarceration that incapacitates and often predisposes offenders to commit crime;
- ☀ Address the source of the crime for defendants with drug/alcohol abuse problems or addictions through drug and alcohol treatment;
- ☀ Hold offenders accountable;
- ☀ Put offenders to work, paying restitution and supporting their families;
- ☀ Turn offenders into contributing members of society;
- ☀ Partner public and private resources;
- ☀ Save tax dollars;
- ☀ Help reduce prison and jail overcrowding without the forced release of prisoners;
- ☀ Separate violent and nonviolent offenders;
- ☀ Save scarce prison beds for violent offenders;
- ☀ Separate violent and nonviolent offenders

### 2004 Community Corrections Bills

- Supplemental Appropriations for Community Corrections in the amount of \$2.6 million, to enable full implementation of Act 2003-353.
- Bondsman's Process Fee for Community Corrections – Assessing a \$20 fee for the issuance of bondsman's process; \$15 collected in state courts to be distributed to the State-County Community Corrections Partnership Fund created by Act 2003-353. Fees collected in municipal courts are to be distributed to the Corrections fund and earmarked for the funding of community corrections and work release programs.

### Community Corrections and Punishment Act Act 2003-353

Act 2003-353 was passed by the Legislature last year to ensure accountability and to encourage the growth of local community corrections through grants from the Department of Corrections. The key initiatives in this Act were the creation of a separate Community Corrections division in the Department of Corrections with full-time director and support staff and the creation of the State-County Community Partnership Fund as an identifiable fund to receive earmarked appropriations for community corrections programs. Implementation of these provisions was contingent on the appropriation of \$5.5 million for community corrections programs. When the General Fund budget passed, there was only \$2.9 million authorized for community corrections programs, \$2.6 million short of the amount set as the minimum to establish the new Community Corrections division in the Department of Corrections.

**“[T]he importance of ... diverting non-violent offenders to community corrections programs cannot be over emphasized...”**

**“... The State and its Courts need to become much more reliant on the use of locally managed community-based corrections programs and supervision, ... locally-managed corrections programs can be much more effective than prison and usually less expensive for appropriate non-violent criminal offenders.”**

Excerpt from the Executive Summary of the Alabama Adult Corrections Plan prepared by Carter Goble Associates, Inc. March 1, 2003

- ☀ Cost of Incarceration - \$27 per inmate per day.
- ☀ Cost of Community Corrections - average of \$10 per day per offender.
- ☀ There are now 6,700 state inmates that are eligible for diversion to Community Corrections programs.

# Community Corrections Programs

25 Programs Serving 31 Counties

- Programs:
1. Jefferson

2. Mobile

3. Montgomery

4. Madison

5. Tuscaloosa

6. Houston

7. Etowah

8. Calhoun

9. Shelby

10. Cullman

11. Walker

12. Marshall

13. Lauderdale

14. DeKalb

15. Jackson

16. Franklin

17. Geneva

18. Fayette, Lamar & Pickens

19. Cherokee

20. Lawrence

21. Escambia

22. Winston/ Marion

\*23. Dale

\*24. Dallas, Hale, Perry & Wilcox

\*25. Colbert

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\*26. Dale

\*27. Dallas

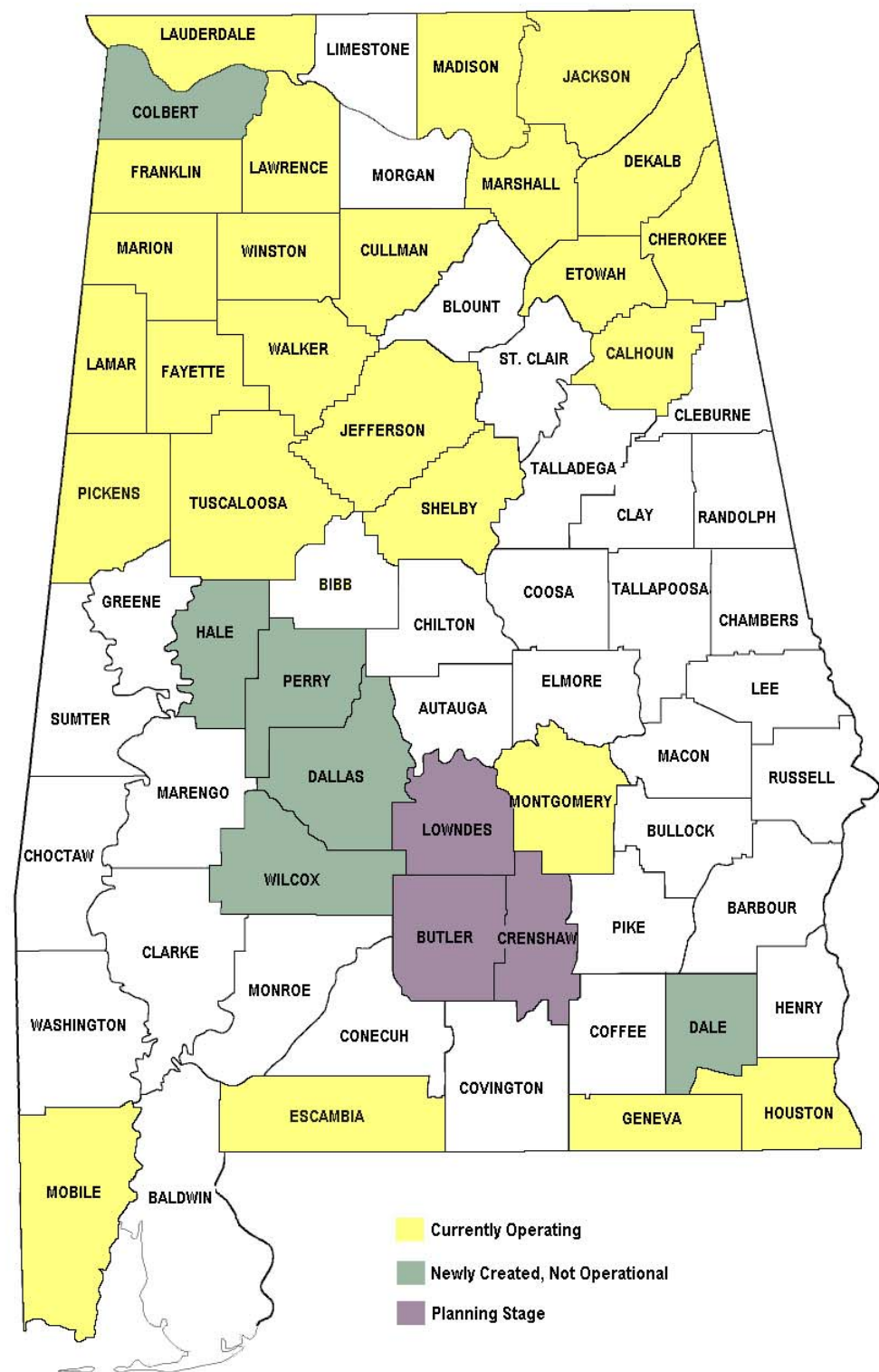
\*28. Hale

\*29. Perry

\*30. Wilcox

\*31. Colbert
- \* Newly created, not operational

Serving over 10,500 felony offenders



## THE STATS TELL THE STORY

### Alabama Relies More Heavily on Incarceration than Most States

- Alabama has the 5<sup>th</sup> highest incarceration rate in the nation, although its index crime rate ranks just above the national average.
- Over the last 30 years, while Alabama’s population has increased only 30%, its inmate population has increased 600%.

### We Have Run Out of Space

There are currently 27,344 (As of Dec. 2003) felons committed to the Department of Corrections. Alabama’s newest prison, Bibb, which opened in 1998 with a design capacity of 900, is now expected to house 1896 inmates. With an overall design capacity of 10,416, 10 of DOC’s 19 facilities are operating at over 200% capacity, 3 are operating at over 190% capacity and one is operating at over 400% capacity.

### Jail Backlog Improving, but Still a Problem

Although the number of inmates housed in county jails with transcripts over 30 days ready has been reduced to 0 by incarcerating our inmates in other states, according to the February 6, 2004 DOC County Jail Report there were still 1,032 state inmates housed in county jails, with transcripts ready on 525.

### Are Scarce Prison Beds Being Reserved for Violent Offenders?

Of the number of felony offenders incarcerated, 4,082 or 14.9% are serving time for drug or felony DUI crimes.

Approximately 45% of DOC inmates are in substance abuse treatment programs (12,722 – last count), with over 7,000 on the waiting list for alcohol and substance abuse programs.

More than 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s of the inmate population are serving sentences for property and drug offenses.

### Are Our Communities Any Safer?

If incarceration works, Alabama should be crime free. The truth is, the felony offenders that are being sent to the penitentiary are coming back to the communities meaner, with the same drug and alcohol problems they went in with, with no prospects for employment and without supervision. Over 35% of the inmate population are released at the end of their sentence with no supervision.